

The White House: THE GLOBAL MESSENGER

Friday, May 16, 2003

TODAY'S SCHEDULE

All Times EDT/Subject to Change

11 a.m. -- President Bush meets with the Prime Minister of Norway

12:15 p.m. -- White House Briefing

TBD -- State Department Briefing

KEY POINTS FROM AMB. BREMER'S PRESS CONFERENCE, 5/15/03

- Across most of Iraq, life is getting better:
 - The regime of fear and oppression is gone;
 - The Shi'a of Iraq can honor their religious traditions for the first time in decades;
 - Town councils and local politicians are already starting to meet and openly and freely select their leaders;
 - Water quality today is better in Basra than it has been for years, and more Iraqis today have access to electricity than ever before.
- A number of problems still remain, and we will continue to address them - in particular, the problem of law and order in Baghdad.
- Saddam released some 100,000 prisoners onto the streets last October. Many of these people were political prisoners, but some were violent criminals. It's time these people were put back in jail, and that's where we will put them.
- Police are now coming back to work, and we're starting to train them. In the old days, they received their orders from on high in Saddam's regime. In the new Iraq, they will answer to the Iraqi people.
- Those who used their power to repress the Iraqi people are being removed from office. We will soon take further steps to root out Ba'athists and Ba'athism from Iraq forever.
- We will ensure that representations of Saddam Hussein and other Ba'athist symbols are removed systematically from public display. And we will work with the Iraqis to set up a process of bringing Ba'athist officials to justice for their past crimes.
- The Coalition will work to provide the conditions for Iraqis to govern themselves in the future. We will work with responsible Iraqis to establish a government representative of all Iraqi people.

KEY QUOTE

"As trade expands and knowledge spreads to the Middle East, as women gain a place of equality and respect, as the rule of law takes hold, all peoples of that region will see a new day of justice and a new day of prosperity."

-- **President Bush, in remarks, 5/9/03**

KEY MIDDLE EAST INITIATIVES ON ECONOMIC GROWTH

In his speech on May 9, President Bush outlined proposals for several Middle East initiatives to reignite economic growth and expand opportunity in the Middle East, including:

- Build on our free trade agreements with Israel and Jordan to establish a U.S.-Middle East Free Trade Area within a decade.
- Work with our partners in the region to establish a Middle East finance facility to help small and medium-sized businesses gain access to capital and generate jobs.
- Reform commercial codes, improve the climate for trade and investment, and strengthen property rights through a new initiative for commercial law in cooperation with U.S. and Middle Eastern law schools and jurists, and business-to-business contacts.
- Promote transparency in public finances, help countries fight corruption, and support financial sector reforms based on international best practices.

For more information: <http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2003/05/20030509-12.html>

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The White House

Office of Global Communications

For more information, please see: <http://www.whitehouse.gov/ogc/>

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